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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9833
INFO RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 8190
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 8843
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 8486
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 8364
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MANAGUA 1017

EO 12356: DECL OADR
TAGS: DREP (DECONCINI, DENNIS), NU
SUBJECT: WRAP-UP OF VISIT OF CODEL DECONCINI

REF: (A) MANAGUA 0947 (B) MANAGUA 0976

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~-ENTIRE TEXT.

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2. SUMMARY: SENATOR DENNIS DECONCINI (D-AZ); MRS. SUSAN DECONCINI; MR. ROBERT FEIDLER, CHIEF COUNSEL, CONSTITUTIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE, JUDICIARY COMMITTEE; MR. ROBERT MAYNES, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AND PRESS SECRETARY TO THE SENATOR; AND LTC. WALTER J. MARM, ESCORT OFFICER, VISITED NICARAGUA ON FEBRUARY 14 AND 15. THE SENATOR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY JOURNALISTS JOHN KOLBE OF THE PHOENIX GAZETTE AND JONATHAN FREEDMAN OF THE SAN DIEGO TRIBUNE. DURING THE VISIT, THE SENATOR MET WITH VARIOUS PRIVATE SECTOR AND CHURCH LEADERS, THE INDEPENDENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. (END SUMMARY)

3. SENATOR DENNIS DECONCINI AND MRS. DECONCINI ARRIVED IN MANAGUA ON THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 15 ACCOMPANIED BY STAFF ASSISTANTS ROBERT MAYNES AND ROBERT FEIDLER, ESCORT OFFICER WALTER J. MARM, JOHN KOLBE FROM THE PHOENIX GAZETTE AND JONATHAN FREEDMAN FROM THE SAN DIEGO TRIBUNE. THE SENATOR AND HIS PARTY ATTENDED A DINNER THAT EVENING HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR AND MRS. QUANTON. THE DINNER WAS GIVEN TO ALLOW THE SENATOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUAINT HIMSELF WITH THE VIEWS OF SEVERAL CONTADORA AMBASSADORS (VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA, MEXICO, GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS), THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR AND TWO UN OFFICIALS. AMBASSADOR OTTO REICH ALSO ATTENDED THE DINNER.

4. THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 16, SENATOR AND MRS. DECONCINI ATTENDED A PRIVATE BREAKFAST HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR QUANTON. THE BREAKFAST WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY AMBASSADOR OTTO REICH AS WELL AS ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO AND PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO, EDITOR OF LA PRENSA. FOLLOWING THE BREAKFAST, THE SENATOR AND HIS PARTY HAD A COUNTRY TEAM BRIEFING AT THE EMBASSY. THEY WERE LATER JOINED BY ENRIQUE BOLANOS, PRESIDENT OF COSEP, AND LUIS RIVAS LEIVA, PRESIDENT OF THE

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SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY(PSD).

5. AFTER THE COUNTRY TEAM MEETING, THE SENATOR AND HIS PARTY RECEIVED A MILITARY BRIEFING FROM SANDINISTA ARMY (EPS) SUBCOMANDANTE ROBERTO SANCHEZ. SANCHEZ WELCOMED THE SENATOR ON THE BEHALF OF NICARAGUA AND STATED THAT NICARAGUA ENCOURAGED VISITS OF U.S. CONGRESSMEN TO AID IN MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, AND SAID IT WAS A PITY THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT AS FREELY GIVE VISAS TO NICARAGUAN OFFICIALS WHO WANTED TO VISIT THE U.S. THE SUBCOMANDANTE WENT ON TO STATE THAT NICARAGUA WAS A SMALL, POOR COUNTRY WHICH HAD PAID A TERRIBLE PRICE IN LIVES TO OVERCOME SOMOZA. NOW NICARAGUANS WERE FACING A SIMILAR TERRIBLE PROBLEM WITH THE USG SUPPORTING THE SOMOCISTA GUERRILLAS BASED IN HONDURAS. SANCHEZ THEN ASKED THE SENATOR WHY THE USG DID NOT STOP THIS "AGGRESSION AGAINST THE INNOCENT PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA." THE SENATOR AGREED THAT THERE WERE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN NICARAGUA AND THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS WOULD PROBABLY BE WILLING TO DISCONTINUE SUPPORT TO COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY OPERATIONS IN NICARAGUA IF THE GRN WOULD DISCONTINUE ITS SUPPORT TO GUERRILLA FORCES IN EL SALVADOR. SANCHEZ ADMITTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD SYMPATHY FOR THE GUERRILLAS IN EL SALVADOR, BUT EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT NICARAGUA WAS IN ANY WAY SUPPORTED THEM. THE SENATOR ASKED WHY NICARAGUA WAS SPENDING SO MUCH OF ITS MONEY ON AN EXCESSIVE MILITARY BUILDUP, WHEN THE FUNDS COULD BE BETTER USED TO HELP ITS PEOPLE, AND CITED THE TANKS AND ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS NICARAGUA HAD PURCHASED. HE ALSO MENTIONED THE EXPANSION/ CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR MIG-CAPABLE AIRPORTS. SUBCOMANDANTE SANCHEZ BLAMED THE U.S. AND HONDURAS FOR THE NECESSITY OF A STRONG MILITARY IN NICARAGUA. HE STATED THAT THE GRN PURCHASED TANKS BECAUSE HONDURAS HAD THEM, AND DENIED THAT ANY AIRPORT WAS BEING BUILT OR MODIFIED TO HANDLE MIGS.

THE CLOSING MOMENTS OF THE MEETING WERE CENTERED AROUND A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE FDN COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY FORCES. SENATOR DECONCINI POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD MET THE DIRECTORS OF THE FDN AND THEY HAD ALL BEEN ANTI-SOMOZA DURING THE REVOLUTION. SANCHEZ CLAIMED THAT EACH OF THEM WAS PRO-SOMOZA AND WAS TRYING TO RETURN A SOMOZA TYPE OF GOVERNMENT TO POWER.

6. AFTER THE MILITARY BRIEFING, SENATOR DECONCINI MET MISS MARTA PATRICIA BALTODANO OF THE INDEPENDENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (CPDH) FOR A BRIEFING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NICARAGUA. SHE STATED THAT MANY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HAD OCCURRED IN NICARAGUA SINCE THE 1979 REVOLUTION. THESE INCLUDED MANY INCIDENTS OF ARRESTS WITHOUT TRIAL UNDER THE EMERGENCY POWERS ACT. THE CPDH HAD MANY EXAMPLES, SHE SAID, TO SHOW THAT THESE EMERGENCY POWERS ENABLED THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT TO IMPRISON WHOMEVER THEY WANTED FOR POLITICAL REASONS. PEOPLE ARRESTED DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO ANY LEGAL RECOURSE AND COULD BE HELD INDEFINITELY. THE SENATOR WAS VERY INTERESTED IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S FINDINGS AND ASKED FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS. THE SENATOR ALSO ASKED HOW THE CPDH WAS ALLOWED TO REMAIN OPEN WHEN THEY HAD SO MUCH DAMAGING INFORMATION ON THE GRN. MISS BALTODANO REPLIED THAT THE CPDH OFFICES HAD BEEN CLOSED SEVERAL TIMES, BUT SAID INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE HAD FORCED THE GRN TO ALLOW CPDH TO REOPEN. WHEN THE SENATOR ASKED HOW THE CPDH WAS ABLE TO FINANCE ITSELF UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, MISS BALTODANO SAID THE MAJORITY OF CPDH FUNDING CAME FROM THE NICARAGUAN PRIVATE SECTOR, WITH OCCASIONAL DONATIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS.

7. THE REST OF THE DAY BEGINNING WITH LUNCH WAS HOSTED BY THE GRN. THE GRN SCHEDULE INCLUDED MEETINGS WITH THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER VICTOR TINOCO AND THE COUNCIL OF

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STATE PRESIDENT COMANDANTE CARLOS NUNEZ, REPORTED REFTELS.
DURING THE GRN-HOSTED LUNCH, SENATOR DECONCINI MET WITH
FATHERS FERNANDO CARDENAL AND JAVIER GOROSTIAGA, JESUIT
PRIESTS, TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS AS PART OF THE POPULAR
CHURCH. ALSO ATTENDING WAS RAMON MENESES FROM THE FSLN
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS(DRI).

8. WHILE WAITING FOR HIS DEPARTING FLIGHT AT THE AIRPORT,
SENATOR DECONCINI SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH HIS VISIT AND
FELT HE HAD RECEIVED A BALANCED PICTURE OF THE SITUATION.
QUAINTON
END OF MESSAGE

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